



CALTRANS NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Caltrans Employees Receive Governor's Safety Awards

Redding – Two California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) employees recently received the Governor's Safety Award at a ceremony held at the University of California at Davis. Rich Palmer and Scott Porter, both employees in the Maintenance division, displayed true acts of heroism and were recognized by the Governor's office during this daylong event. Individual state employees, groups of state employees, and state departments who have made a significant contribution to the health and safety of the state's workplaces, are all eligible for the award. Awards recognize accomplishments beyond the normal call of duty and are selected and approved by the Office of Risk and Insurance Management (ORIM) statewide nomination selection.

Palmer, a Caltrans Equipment Operator II in Hat Creek received his award for saving the life of a co-worker. On February 20, 2003, during a lunch break, Cliff Jorgensen tossed a handful of raisins into his mouth with his head tilted back causing him to choke. Jorgensen tried unsuccessfully to dislodge the blockage himself and began gasping for air. Palmer knew his co-worker was in trouble and performed the Heimlich Maneuver and after thrusting twice was successful in dislodging the blockage.

On the morning of December 14, 2003, Scott Porter, a Caltrans Equipment Operator II in Platina, was called to into work to help clear the roadway during a heavy and wet snow storm. At approximately 8:30 a.m. he heard a radio conversation about an accident. He returned to the area where he found the vehicle over the embankment. He determined that the driver was okay, but the passenger was seriously injured and in need of medical attention. A former Army medic, Porter drew on his experience and monitored the victim's condition and stayed with her until help arrived. His ability to locate the car and provide medical assistance contributed to saving a life.

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NOTE: An electronic version of this news release and photo are available on the internet at the following web address: http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist2/news_releases.htm

(Photo Caption: Pictured from left are Jeff Kiser, Maintenance Manager I; Bruce Thomas, Hat Creek Maintenance Supervisor; Scott Porter; Richard Palmer and Russ Wenham, Deputy District Director Maintenance and Operations)

